

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8839

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

CINCPAC

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OCON, PFOR, TH, VS, VN

SUBJECT: SPEECH OF THANAT KHOMAN AT HONG KONG CONFERENCE

1. ON OCTOBER 21, I SPOKE TO FINANCIAL TIMES CONFERENCE IN HONG KONG ON SUBJECT OF ECONOMIC TRENDS IN ASEAN REGION. SPEAKER IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING ME WAS FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER THANAT KHOMAN OF THAILAND. THANAT GAVE RATHER DRAMATIC SPEECH CONCERNING DANGERS OF BIG POWER CONFRONTATION IN INDOCHINA. HIS EMPHASIS WAS UPON DANGER OF SINO-SOVIET CONFLICT, WITH "U.S. STANDING ON SIDELINES."

2. HOWEVER, THANAT WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE DOUBTED U.S. COULD STAY COMPLETELY OUT OF ANY CONFRONTATION WHICH DEVELOPED ALONG THE MEKONG. THEREFORE, HE BELIEVED THAI POLICY SHOULD NOT RPT NOT BE PREMISED UPON ASSUMPTION OF COMPLETE U.S. WITHDRAWAL FROM THE AREA.

3. SPECIFICALLY, THANAT CRITICIZED KUKRIT GOVERNMENT FOR ITS PUBLIC DEMAND THAT ALL U.S. FORCES BE WITHDRAWN FROM THAILAND BY NEXT MARCH. INSTEAD, HE RECOMMENDED THAT RTG USE U.S. FORCES PRESENT IN THAILAND AS BARGAINING LEVERS

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WITH NORTH VIETNAMESE. HE SAID HE DID NOT EXPECT DIRECT

DRV ATTACK UPON THAILAND BUT FELT SUBVERSION WOULD INTENSITY.
HIS RECOMMENDATION WAS THAT RTG NEGOTIATE WITH HANOI TO
OBTAIN DRV COMMITMENT AGAINST SUBVERSION IN RETURN FOR
U.S. MILITARY WITHDRAWAL FROM THAILAND.

4. ADDITIONALLY, THANAT EXPRESSED REGRET THAT U.S. HAD
VETOED ENTRY OF TWO VIETNAMS INTO UN. HE FELT UN
MACHINERY SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO BEAR UPON HANOI TO RESTRAIN
IT FROM MENACING ITS NEIGHBORS AND THAT THIS COULD BEST BE
DONE BY HAVING DRV BECOME A FULL UN MEMBER.

5. I REPORT THIS SPEECH BECAUSE I AM NOT SURE WHAT, IF
ANYTHING, HAS BEEN CARRIED IN THAI AND U.S. PRESS ON THIS
SUBJECT. MOREOVER, IF DISTORTED PRESS COVERAGE WHICH WAS
GIVEN MY BRIEF REMARKS IS ANY EXAMPLE OF TREATMENT GIVEN
THANAT, IT MAY BE APPROPRIATE TO SET RECORD STRAIGHT. THANAT
TOLD ME HE HAD GIVEN ED MASTERS A PREVIEW OF HIS SPEECH
BEFORE HE LEFT BANGKOK, SO I MAY BE CARRYING COALS TO
NEWCASTLE.
SULLIVAN

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